1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

adolescent boys and men, although it is also attempted by any girl old enough to handle a gun. 224 252

Porcupine are either shot or clubbed to death. Lacking a gun, Paulette Donnelly once used down a jackpine on which she had seen a porcupine sitting. As the tree fell and the animal began to wobble off, Paulette went in pursuit and clubbed it with the back of her ax. After a porcupine is killed the hunter builds a fire and burns off the quills. The animal is then laid on a carpet of brush for butchering. A cut is first made on the ventral surface of the body, extending from the neck to the anus. The stomach and intestines immediately fall from the body cavity. The small intestine is carefully cut free, in order to preserve its blanket of fat. This organ resembles a string of link sausage, and is emptied by being pinched downward from the junction of each link. The heart, liver, and kidneys are left in the carcass, which is packed back to camp with the small gut.

The duck and goose are hunted in spring and fall, and the spruce hen and willow grouse throughout the year. Chicken hunting, like rabbit hunting, is generally motivated by the need for meat but girls frequently kill these birds while tending to the family's rabbit line. Generally the birds are plucked immediately after being killed, when the feathers are easy to remove. Success in hunting chicken depends largely on encountering a sizable flock of feeding birds. A man may also return to a spot where he killed several spruce hens to shoot those which escaped but which remained in the neighborhood. With luck favoring him, a hunter will sometimes return from a fowling trip with six to nine birds. When a man's bag is as large as this, he may send some of his catch to other families in camp. 223 [221] [252]

Most fishing is done in lakes and rivers before the formation of ice. The commonest fish caught for food are the grayling, river trout, lake trout, and jackfish. Fishing trips are motivated by a desire for fresh fish as a change from meat, or by the necessity of securing nourishing food for dogs. Fishing is done with a baited or fly hook and with nets. In the fall, when fish travel into a slough to spawn, a net may be strung at the entrance to such a place. Nets are hung with floats about eight inches long and four inches in diameter prepared from spruce wood. Flat stones about two inches wide and three inches long are selected for sinkers. The stones are tied to the lower end of the net at ten inch intervals. Fish line is used for this purpose, the rock being secured in a running noose and the upper end of the line fastened to the net with a double overhand knot. Several feet of manilla rope are added to each end of the net and secured on shore to a piece of drift wood or an overhanging willow. Sometimes fish are driven out of a slough into a net by shooting, the concussion sending several stunned grayling and trout to the surface. When several hours will be required to transport fish to camp, they are often gutted at the fishing site. If fish are to be carried only a short distance, they are strung through the mouth and gills on a thin willow shoot, the ends of which are then twisted together. Near camp a man or boy may fish alone. Generally men only use lines, but either sex may set a fish net. In the fall, a whole family sometimes travels several miles to a likely fishing spot and spends the day there eating fresh roasted fish. Often a family or two men will travel up to ten or fifteen miles to a fish lake, camping there for several days or a week and accumulating a dozen or two large jackfish and lake trout. 226 [221] 227 [252]

Only the rabbit is trapped exclusively for food, setting and visiting rabbit snares being 224 462

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411 321 Bone for tips came from the lower hind leg of the caribou or moose. Eagle feathers, procured from the bird's nest, made the favorite vanes, although arrows for grouse and spruce hens might be tipped with feathers from owls. Crow feathers were avoided, it being said that they made too much noise. After being split, the feathers were glued to the shaft with spruce gum and secured with sinew line. Then each feather was trimmed in a graceful arc. Two- as well as three-feather vanes occurred. In the latter the vanes always lay on three sides of the shaft; never were two vanes located on top. To contain arrows, women manufactured quivers of tanned moosehide, three feet long and six inches in diameter, decorated with tassels and porcupine-quill embroidery. Shoulder straps also carried embroidery. Two compartments in the container separated bird from larger game arrows, both types being inserted into the quiver point first. A birch-bark bottom prevented the sharp points from piercing the hide. A man always wore his quiver under the left arm, shoulder quivers being unknown. When standing on land the hunter held his bow in an absolutely vertical position. In a canoe as well as when standing on land, he employed the weapon horizontally. The first and second fingers pulled the arrow. Use of the third finger to grasp the bowstring (i.e., the Mediterranean-type release) was not admitted.

411 Spears, serving as war and hunting weapons, measured from five to ten feet in length and were furnished with disc points or with sharpened, caribou-horn blades. Longer spears, used against bear and caribou, carried only flint points. Calf hooks were of bone. Slings, employed in hunting small game, enjoyed greater use as toys than as serious weapons. From wood and caribou horn men shaped clubs used, for example, against the bear and porcupine.

224 Hunting techniques sometimes required the hunter to wait in ambush for an animal to come within range of his weapon. At other times a man was obliged to drive, track, or pursue game. An example of the first mentioned type of technique is seen in the erection of the "bear tipi," constructed when the people "really wanted a bear." A conical structure with an entry big enough to admit a bear was located in the bush and toward evening provided with a fire. The hunter spread animal fat around the shelter and then, armed with a heavy, caribou-horn club, crawled inside to wait. Presently, if the man's plans were realized, a bear crept around, attracted by the smell of the grease. As soon as the animal put its head into the structure the man struck. The evening's success need not yet be at an end. After dragging the carcass into the shelter the Indian waited on in the hope of a second bear visiting. Sometimes cubs followed a female into the ambush.

Another kind of decoy is seen in connection with hunting caribou in winter. A hunter spying caribou on a lake might fashion a decoy by spreading a caribou skin across a willow-pole framework. With this left on the ice, the hunter hid a short distance away. The animals, their curiosity aroused, came to investigate the decoy and so entered ● 223 within range of the man's weapon. Game birds were also hunted from ambush. For grouse and spruce hens an Indian selected a willow pole about 15 feet long and cleaned it of bark. At the end he provided a noose of split spruce line. With this implement he crept close to the birds, endeavoring to slip the noose over an animal's head, whereupon

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he pulled the noose tight. Boys sought to catch robins and other small birds with snowshoe traps. Snowshoes were placed on their sides so that they met at an acute angle. Bait was placed under the trap, from which a line extended to a cover where the young hunters lay in concealment. As a bird entered the structure a boy pulled the line, bringing the snowshoes down on the helpless prize.

For hunting caribou, circular enclosures were built that often reached a diameter of 50 feet. Such surrounds consisted of a circle of upright poles with in-between spaces piled with brush. Various points along the fence held snares, each man who cooperated in the building of the pen also setting a few snares. Cooperative effort drove the animals into the surround, where they could be pursued and dispatched with arrows. A wounded caribou could never be clubbed to death nor might he be touched with wood. To violate these injunctions promised a quick end to a hunter's success and might bring retribution in the form of illness. Men sometimes drove caribou into a ravine or against a cliff, where they could easily be speared to death. Sometimes human beings formed caribou "surrounds."

Semicircular tracking, involving a hunter pursuing an animal against the wind, figured in caribou and moose hunting. For this procedure in dry weather, a man removed his moccasins upon encountering a fresh track. Bare feet enabled him to move more quickly, it was said. In autumn caribou and moose were called with birch bark horns or with a moose scapula rubbed briskly against a tree. During the moose calling season a man exercised caution never to take a moose scapula into camp lest a woman set eyes on the bone. Should this happen, he might lose his hunting ability. Before animal traction became prevalent small dogs assisted hunters in running down moose and bear.

Other hunting techniques included breaking into a beaver house in autumn and killing the occupants with spears. The same animals were also taken with nets or with the gaff stick, an implement further employed to hook a porcupine in its den. In summer porcupine could be clubbed to death easily.

Kills of large game ended up by being shared between the hunter's and neighboring families who customarily sent representatives to pack home the meat. At the scene of a kill each man selected that part of the animal appealing to him. Sometimes, especially when meat was scarce, quarreling might occur over the food's distribution. A story is told of one man who sought to tear a caribou head from the clutch of another. The latter fiercely held on to the tongue until that organ was wrenched from the mouth. A "lazy" man, who did not choose to hunt, freely joined a party going to fetch meat from a kill. Failure to share meat aroused resentment and ridicule. As already indicated, men did the genuine part of hunting, boys early accompanying fathers into the bush to learn the necessary techniques. A man who lacked sons might train his eldest daughter to hunt, but her success in such work was believed to depend largely on her chastity.

Although the Upper Liard Kaska, like other northern Indians, regarded game as the most attractive food, actually fish provided the dietary mainstay of the population. From the lakes and rivers people took jackfish, lake pickerel, lake and brook trout, whitefish (in smaller numbers because they were also the prey of jackfish), grayling, burbot, and sucker. Clubbing, spearing, shooting with bow and arrow, netting, and trap-